

AIR WAR COLLEGE

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**COUNTERING ISLAMIC RADICALIZATION**

**INDONESIAN EXPERIENCES**

by

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## **Biography**

Colonel Agung Sasongkojati entered the Indonesian Air Force (TNI AU) in 1986 as a graduate of the Indonesian Air Force Direct Entry Pilot Officer School. He is a fighter pilot with over 3500 flying hours in AS-202 Bravo, T-34 C, PC-9A, Hawk MK-53, F-5E Tiger II, F-16, and Hawk 109/209. His qualification including Fighter Weapon Instructor, Flying Instructor and F-16 Functional Check Pilot. He attended Flying Instructor School at East Sale RAAF Base Victoria, Combined TNI AU-RSAF Fighter Weapons School at Pekanbaru AFB Riau, Squadron Officer School in Jakarta and Air Command and Staff College at Maxwell AFB Alabama. His flying assignment started with 15<sup>th</sup> Air Sqn., 14<sup>th</sup> Air Sqn. and 3<sup>rd</sup> Air Sqn. at Iswahyudi AFB East Java, 102<sup>nd</sup> Training Sqn. at Adisucipto AFB Yogyakarta, CFS at East Sale RAAF Base Victoria, and 12<sup>th</sup> Air Sqn. at Pekanbaru AFB Riau. Following his flying assignment, Col. Sasongkojati was assigned to National Air Defense HQ in Jakarta as Chief of Air Defence Operation Center, and then as Commander of Sam Ratulangi AFB North Sulawesi, Executive Officer at Squadron Officer School in Jakarta, Assistant of Operation at 3<sup>rd</sup> Air Defence Sector Command in Medan North Sumatra and Lecturer at the Air Command and Staff College in Bandung West Java. His last assignment is at the TNI AU Information Center as the Chief of Public Affairs Division. He is currently a student at the Air War College at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama.

## **Abstract**

The ideological power behind attractiveness of ISIS and other radical group's global propaganda campaign toward young generation of Muslim is based on Wahabbism ideology with the spirit of Pan Islamic Nationalism. This paper using Gramscian theory of hegemony to analyze how jihadist counterhegemonic movement have supported by Wahhabist campaign of spreading "common sense" among the Muslim which already accepted its as "standard Islamic norms". The jihadist strategy is using "war of position" through persuasion or propaganda, to increase the number of people who share its view on the hegemonic order then radicalized unaware young Muslims to join the jihadist movement or uprising against the government. Then describes the Wahabbism as the ideological power behind Islamic radicals and this argument supported by the fact that they all have in common visions, strategies and objectives and dream to establish the Islamic state based on sharia. The next we discuss about Islam in Indonesia which so far could hinder the influence and less affected by Wahabbist radical groups propaganda. It could be done by the nature of Indonesian Muslim and strong influences by western educated Islamic scholar to contain radicalism messages, and finally using Indonesian experiences to propose the Indonesian way to stem the Wahabbism in other country, by controlling and modifying four areas related to public consent or "common sense," such as education, language, religion and the media. This should be considered to control the influence of the message to the younger Muslim generation so that they are immune from radicalization and inducement of radical Islamic groups.

## **Introduction**

Nearly four years after the withdrawal of U.S. military forces from Iraq in 2011, the United States-led military coalition is back in action in northern Iraq and Syria, confronting a more complex and militarily advanced enemy, the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham or ISIS.<sup>1</sup> This time the US-led coalition is confronted with a jihadist terrorist organization with pretensions and capacities to become a state founded upon religious instead of secular law.<sup>2</sup> Audrey Kurth Cronin considered that ISIS represents the post-al Qaeda jihadist threat and suggesting that it is more appropriate to see ISIS as an insurgent group, or even, a “pseudo-state led by a conventional army”.<sup>3</sup> ISIS’s extensive territorial gains, its financial resources, its military achievements, its unprecedented extreme barbarism, its skilled use of social and other media to publicize its propaganda, its succeeded in recruiting thousands of young people from around the world, have all made ISIS an increasing and alarming threat to global security.<sup>4</sup> The clear and present danger is the fact that ISIS successfully maximizes the role of internet as media to spread constructed messages or “narratives”, not only as recruiting tool but also as fostering tool of radicalization, which might manifest themselves in the form of terrorist violence<sup>5</sup>.

The rising of ISIS, however supported by the fact that a decade after 911, the underlying extremism narrative offered by jihadists operatives remains strong and compelling for many Muslims. Jihadist groups, including ISIS, charge that the United States and the West, are at war with Islam and that the Muslim world must unify to defeat this threat and reestablish the Islamic caliphate. Based on that fact, we should not only defeating ISIS in the “kinetic” battle zone but also in the “informational” warfare zone. ISIS’s constructed messages or “narratives” should be countered by sending more powerful “counter-narratives” as an essential part of counter-radicalization responses.<sup>6</sup> In order to ideologically counter the jihadist “narratives”, we should rewrite the “narrative” of grievances, which is promoted by extremist to enlist new followers into

their ranks.<sup>7</sup> One crucial limitation of current counter narrative efforts against jihadist propaganda relates to the understanding of narratives as simple “messages” or “stories.” Jihadist narratives, however, are much more than rhetorical devices; they are socially constructed; they have the same “common sense” using carefully twisted verses from Qur’an and Hadist about how to see the world with radical point of view. We can’t just craft the “right” narratives and believe that if this is received by followers of extremists, they will stop committing acts of terrorism.<sup>8</sup>

Understanding the root of jihadist ideology is the most important step before create a communication strategy to the Muslim world to achieve our goal not only to promote counter jihadist narratives but also to encourage Muslims to lead the global movement against radical Islamism. The global jihadist threat that confronts world democracies in the shape of radical Islamist groups like the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, Al Qaeda, Jema’ah Islamiyah, Boko Haram, Al Shabab, Al Nusra and others are all followers of the Wahhabism practice of Islam, which as a matter of fact, supported by Saudi Arabia across the globe for five decades. Wahhabism remains immutable rule in Saudi Arabia and Shari’a (Islamic law) takes place as the Saudi Arabia constitution.<sup>9</sup> Textbooks in Saudi Arabia’s schools, colleges and universities teach this brand of Islam. They recruit students from around the world, train them in the bigotry of Wahabbism and send them back to Muslim communities in places like the Balkans, Africa, Pakistan, Indonesia, Bangladesh and Egypt, where these Saudi-trained hard-liners work to construct a general “common sense” among Muslims that Muslim under attack by infidels, and the best way to solve Muslim problems is to apply Sharia as state law, if necessary by eradicating the local, harmonious forms of Islam. This is exactly the same of what ISIS is attempting to do with its Islamic Caliphate.<sup>10</sup>

To defeat jihadist groups, we should find a strategy to challenge their strategy to manipulate, hide and deemphasize aspects of Islamic history, law, and Quranic verses, based on a rigid interpretation of Sharia.<sup>11</sup> Our strategy should address the theological and ideological roots of extremism not only by pushing Saudi Arabia to reforming the home of Islam but also educating Muslim society about other peaceful concepts of practicing Islam, follow Indonesian experiences, as the largest Muslim country, with 226 million Muslims, but least affected by ISIS propaganda, by the fact that only a few Indonesian went to join ISIS if compared with some Middle East, Asian and even European countries with far less Muslim population.<sup>12</sup> Indonesian democracy is mature enough in handling ideological and cultural differences, and government anti-extremism policy successfully stem Wahabbist groups to get sympathy from the public.<sup>13</sup>

This paper uses Gramscian approach to look at Indonesia's strategy to protect its young Muslim from Wahabbism, the ideological power behind ISIS's global campaign to recruit more followers, sympathizers and fighters. The argument takes four paths. First, briefly illuminate the Gramscian theory of hegemony as the theoretical approach adopted in the analysis of this study, second, looking at Wahabbism as the ideological power behind Islamic radicals, third, discuss about Indonesia teaching of Islam, which could hamper the influence of Wahabbism, and finally using Indonesian experiences as lesson learned for other countries to find the best strategy to stem the Wahhabism influence on their young Muslim, so they will be immuned from radicalization and inducement to support and/or join jihadist groups.

### **Gramscian Theory of Hegemony.**

**World as a Hegemonic System.** As has been stated earlier, the analytical method adopted for this study largely falls in the Antonio Gramsci theory of hegemony. Gramsci developed the concept of “hegemony”, which encompasses not only the economic or “coercive power” of the dominant forces within a particular society but also the “consent power” of the cultural, moral, and ideological leadership to control over the masses.<sup>14</sup> The dominant powers retain power over the masses through both “coercion and consent” forces. While coercion force, especially employed through coercive agents like the military, police, and judicial system, along with the economic structure, certainly perform a crucial role in preserving the elites’ grasp on power, it is the so-called “consensual” force that are in fact more important, because it is rooted in the society’s intellectual, moral, and cultural power, which have ability to promote the types of values, beliefs, and ideas that help to maintain the rule of the dominant elite.<sup>15</sup>

Robert Cox transferred Gramscian notions and concepts of “hegemony” to the global stage by looked at global dominance of the United States and its Western allies, not just about military and economic preeminence, but also cultural and ideological supremacy.<sup>16</sup> The West preserves the hegemonic nature of the international system by equating its morals and culture with “civilization” itself. World hegemonic system derives predominantly from creation, implementation, and enforcement of the ideas and actions embodied through universal norms, mechanisms and institutions such as the WTO, IMF, or even the United Nations, and at the end it which lay down general rules of behavior for states and civil society that act across national boundaries.<sup>17</sup> The dominant states promote values and beliefs that create the impression that controlling and maintaining current global structure benefits all, when in fact it works in the primary interest of the leading powers themselves.<sup>18</sup> Thrust of “globalization,” promoting

“consensual” ideas and culture of capitalist system which also served to foster the values of consumerism and possessive individualism around the world.<sup>19</sup>

**Counter Hegemonic Forces.** Based on the argument above, Gramscian scholars believe that the main contribution of hegemony is to produce and reproduce the necessary *ideas, beliefs, values*, and even *culture* to expand *hegemonic control* over the international system, then the major players have evolved into a "transnational historic bloc" that exercises global hegemony (in contrast to the realist view of hegemony as the "*predominant power of a state or a group of states*").<sup>20</sup> However there are powerful “*counterhegemonic*” forces opposing the progress of this historic bloc as part of an open-ended class struggle. If a counter hegemony force grows large enough, it is able to subsume and replace the historic bloc it was born in. Gramsci used the Machiavellian terms “*war of position*” and “*war of movement*” to explain this counterhegemonic phenomena. In a “*war of position*” a counterhegemonic movement attempts, through persuasion or propaganda, to increase the number of people who share its view on the hegemonic order; in a “*war of movement*” the counterhegemonic movement which have grown large enough overthrow the current hegemony, violently or democratically, and establish themselves as a new historic bloc.<sup>21</sup>

A historical analysis will assist in linking the phenomenon of “terrorism” as counterhegemonic movement. By looking at the modern history of terrorism, from the French Revolution, through to the Anarchist and Third World nationalist groups of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, to the Islamic fundamentalist movements of today, demonstrates that the term “terrorism” has been applied solely to those movements that have challenged “the status quo” of the dominant powers. These variously deemed “terrorist” groups have sought to challenge the Western dominance or hegemony of the international system, whether “terrorists” have been

perceived as anti-capitalist, anti-democratic, anti-Christian, anti-Western, or anti-American, all were seen as posing a significant danger to the hegemonic powers of Western civilization.<sup>22</sup> From Gramscian point of view, these radical Islamic groups are representations of counter hegemonic movements with their “war of movement” and “war of position” strategy, using both coercion powers and consent powers as tools to achieve their goals.

**Passive Revolution.** In the end, radical Islamic terrorist groups as counter hegemonic movements will only be successful if its radical ideology win in a “war of position” over a globalized civil Islamic society using counter-hegemonic campaign through a prolonged intellectual, cultural, and moral confrontation over contemporary “common sense” conceptions of “reality”. Gramsci argues for a “war of position” to be successful, a counter-hegemonic bloc must employ a strategy that is active, interventionist, and long-term, since the material power and ideological dominance of the hegemon requires a sustained approach to progressively undermine its influence and control over the masses.<sup>23</sup> It is clear that the war of position is not, and cannot be, a direct physical confrontation against the dominant powers.<sup>24</sup> If the goal is to challenge the hegemony of the elites, it must be on the level of “*the superstructure*” through the promotion and promulgation of alternative ideas and meanings.<sup>25</sup> In other words, a counter-hegemonic force must challenge the “common sense” view of the majority.”<sup>26</sup> For Gramsci, the source of “common sense” is the ruling elite who promote a certain conception of “reality” or the “real world” to prevent the masses from realizing their true consciousness and, hence, their own interests.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, the hegemon uses the common sense ideas to acquire the consent of the masses to accept the morality, the customs, and the institutionalized rules of behavior promoted throughout society as absolute truths that cannot or should not be questioned.<sup>28</sup> Gramsci’s counter hegemonic idea promoted the term of “*Passive Revolution*” to refer to a significant change that is not a rapturous

one, but a slow and gradual metamorphosis which could take years or generations to accomplish a new “common sense”. This is the concept of "organic change", a change that appears to be self-starting and natural in the evolution of a society.<sup>29</sup>

Gramsci promotes several main tactics to carry out a “passive revolution” against hegemonic consent, including modifications in the field of *education, language, religion* and *the media* through the institutions of civil society, all worked in tandem to gradually and organically change a society in such a way that met the demands of the ruling class.<sup>30</sup> The first is *education*, that to transform a society, one had to be in firm control of the minds of children, as their world view has yet to be formed by mandatory education, so that future generations would learn and adopt the values, morals, and world views that they were taught, so they have same “common sense”. The second is *language*, to create a new cultural hegemony in society by controlling, and influencing the language of a society, how society speaks, and thus eventually how they begin to think. This largely begins in the schools, but must be repeated in many outlets of society. The third is *religion*; Gramsci looked at religion as a powerful force in civil society, and was amazed by its ability to influence the hearts and minds of people. As a result, control or infiltration of religion would be of crucial importance and religion must echo the "organic change" in society; it must serve to assist the new hegemony. And the last one is *the media*, it must be used smartly to repeat organically, edify, and buttress the revolutionary values and morals that are being disseminated throughout society (through education, language, and religion). The media has a great control over the opinions of people, and this must be utilized, and not be allowed to influence in contrast to the revolution.<sup>31</sup>

## **Wahhabism as the Ideological Power of Jihadist.**

**Wahabbism as Ideology.** Wahabbism is certainly an Islamic “counter hegemonic” movement, a form of Islam practiced in Saudi Arabia that developed in the 18th century.<sup>32</sup> During the 18th century, as the Ottoman imperial powers began to lose control of peripheral territories, revivalist movements sprang up in many parts of the Islamic world. One of the most influential of these revivalists was Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703-1791), a learned scholar of Najd in central Arabia which was inspired by school of Ibn Taymiyya (14th century). He proposed a simple and revolutionary doctrine that every Muslim should return to original Islam concentrate instead on the study of the Quran and the “traditions” (hadith) about the customary practice of the Prophet and his companions in order to restore Islam's Golden Age. According to Wahhabism, the Muslim community's last goal is to become the living embodiment of God's laws on earth.<sup>33</sup> Ibn Abd al-Wahhab found a patron in Muhammad Ibn Saud, a chieftain of Najd. However, Ibn Abd al-Wahhab refused to endorse Ibn Saud's military campaigns for plunder and territory, insisting that jihad was permissible only when the Umma was attacked militarily. Nor did he ever claim that those who fell in battle were martyrs who would be rewarded with a high place in heaven, because a desire for such self-aggrandizement was incompatible with jihad. He also forbade of killing prisoners of war, the deliberate destruction of property and the slaughter of civilians, including women and children.<sup>34</sup> Two forms of Wahhabis were emerging: where Ibn Saud was happy to enforce Wahhabi Islam with the sword to enhance his political position, Ibn Abd al-Wahhab insisted that education, study and debate were the only legitimate means of spreading the one true faith. After his death, Wahhabis cast this inhibition aside and became more violent, an instrument of state terror.<sup>35</sup>

Abd al-Aziz Ibn Muhammad, Ibn Saud's son and successor, sought to establish an independent kingdom, used *takfiri* (pronounce others as unbelievers) to justify the wholesale slaughter of resistant populations. In 1801, his army sacked the holy Shia city of Karbala in Iraq, plundered the tomb of Imam Husain, and slaughtered thousands of Shias, including women children; not much different with ISIS, in 1803, terrorized by fear and panic, the people of holy city of Mecca surrendered.<sup>36</sup> During the First World War, Wahhabist became a political force once again when another Abd al-Aziz, made a new push for statehood and began to carve out a large kingdom for himself with his devout Bedouin army, known as the Ikhwan, which routinely massacred thousands "apostate" unarmed villagers, slaughtering women and children, and routinely slit the throats of all male captives. Regarding all modernization, anything unknown in Muhammad's time, as *bid'ah* (heresy), the Ikhwan also complained Abd al-Aziz for permitting telephones, cars, the telegraph, music and smoking, until finally Abd al-Aziz quashed their rebellion in 1930.<sup>37</sup>

**Exporting Wahabbism.** In the modern era, the official Wahhabis of the Saudi Kingdom abandoned militant jihad and became a religiously conservative movement, except that *takfiri* still an accepted practice and, indeed, essential to the Wahhabi's faith. The Ikhwan spirit and its dream of territorial expansion did not die, but gained new ground in the 1970s, when the kingdom became central to western foreign policy in the region. Washington welcomed the Saudis' opposition to Nasserism (the pan-Arab socialist ideology of Egypt's president, Gamal Abdel Nasser) and to Soviet influence. After the Iranian Revolution, it gave tacit support to the Saudis' project of countering Shia Islamic Revolution by Wahhabising the entire Muslim world using slogan "Pan-Islamic Nationalism".<sup>38</sup> However, the quadrupling in the price of oil created by the 1973 oil crisis increased the kingdom's wealth, and by 1980 Saudi Arabia was earning every three days the

income from oil it had taken a year to earn before the embargo and gave the kingdom all the petrodollars it needed to export Wahhabism, replacing the old military jihad by a cultural offensive with the mask of “Pan-Islamic Nationalism”.<sup>39</sup>

This is the starting point when Saudi Arabia started to develop its own version of “passive revolution” using “constructed narratives” in the field of *education, language, religion* and *the media* through the institutions of Islamic civil society around the world. The Wahhabi’s Ulamas (Religious Scholars) have designed a two-pronged “religious campaign plan” in response to thwart a perceived “Western cultural attack” and “Western conspiracy” on the Muslim world : in the “domestic arena” they sought to Islamize all aspects of Saudi society including its judiciary, media, financial institutions, and educational systems to purge Saudi Arabia of any Western influences. On the “international level”, Saudi Arabia sponsored international counterattack campaign in which pursues a foreign and cultural policy of *Da`wa* (Islamic Mission) backed by the Saudi establishment, to influence the Western world, mainly via Muslims living around the world.<sup>40</sup> As part of this *Da`wa* Saudi Arabia has created or participated in various sorts of Islamic institutions, from the Muslim World League and the World Assembly of Muslim Youth, to the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which includes the International Islamic Court of Justice, and a long list of affiliated groups, banks, and federations.<sup>41</sup>

The Saudi-based “Muslim World League” opened offices in every region inhabited by Muslims, tens of billions of dollars were spent by the Saudi Ministry of Religion on books, electronic and print media, schools, scholarships (from primary to post-graduate), fellowships and subsidies to reward journalists, Islamic academics and scholars. It also built hundreds of Islamic centers, institutes, universities and over one thousand schools and thousands of Saudi-style mosques with Wahhabi preachers in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Canada, the United States,

Australasia and Europe, and established *Madrasas* (Islamic School) that provided free education for the poor, with, of course, a Wahhabi curriculum to Muslim communities around the world.<sup>42</sup> Young men from the poorer Muslim countries, who had felt compelled to find work in the Gulf to support their families brought this faith back home with them, so Wahhabis rejection of all other forms of Islam as well as other faiths would reach as deeply into Pakistan, Jordan, Indonesia, Yemen, Malaysia, Syria, even to Europe and United States. A whole generation of Muslims, therefore, has grown up with new “common sense” of Islam, that has given them a negative view of other faiths and an intolerantly sectarian understanding of their own, gravely undermining Islam’s traditional pluralism.<sup>43</sup>

From Gramscian perspective, Saudi Arabia also play a big part in the “war of movement” by sponsoring wahabbi’s jihadist movements around the world against all kind of ka’firs (non believers) and the “infidels”. From the mid-1980s onward, to counter the Iranian Islamic revolution and *Nasser’s Arab Nationalism* influence among its Saudi population, the Saudi state actively promoted “*Pan-Islamic nationalism*” to boost its own legitimacy and facilitate mobilization of young Muslims for the Afghan jihad. This Pan-Islamic nationalist discourse emphasized the moral responsibility of Saudis to support oppressed Muslims abroad. Where Islamists in such countries as Egypt fought tyranny and corruption at home, Saudi Islamists focused on the humiliation and oppression of Muslims worldwide, and the result was the high level of the Saudis participation in foreign jihad zones.<sup>44</sup> The government encouraged its young men to join the steady stream of recruits from the Islamic world who were joining the Afghan jihad against the Soviet Union. Since the mid-1980s, thousands of young Saudi men have fought as mujahidin in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Tajikistan, Chechnya, and Afghanistan. The power of “common sense” for this activism is Wahhabi radicalism tradition, but masked by Saudi Arabia’s Pan-Islamic nationalism.<sup>45</sup> Hence

there emerged a new “common sense” of declared solidarity with Muslim causes abroad, and widespread social acceptance for financial and military support toward Muslim resistance movements, jihad participation came to be seen by many as an act of altruism and courage and the line between charity and armed support became blurred. Those Saudi’s jihadists were motivated both by hatred of *the infidels* and by the desire to help their Muslim brothers and sisters. This pan-Islamist emphasis was also central to Jihadist’s propaganda, and the martyr-videos of the Saudis who took part in the 9/11 atrocity show that they were influenced by the pain and humiliation of Muslims as a whole, and same feeling may throw light on the motivation of those joining the jihad in Syria and Iraq today.<sup>46</sup>

It is clear that ISIS’s ideology is based on the of Wahhabism, however, unlike Wahhabist policy of modern Saudi Arabia which “officially” promotes “war of position”, ISIS likely represent the Ikhwan original phylosophy of “war of movement” with its extreme war code of conduct and the original Wahabbist brotherhood traditions of cut-throat executions. ISIS operators skillfully using combination of peaceful and violence videos themes on internet, which are carefully and strategically planned not only to attract followers but also to spread terror, deter dissent and inflict fear to the general public. ISIS uses extreme violence to achieve a single, limited and clearly defined objective which is would be impossible to reach without such intensive propaganda campaign.<sup>47</sup> ISIS is a clear and imminent danger for present world order, because it is clearly a jihadist diplomatic, military and informational instruments of power endorsed by Wahhabist idea. It shares the Saudi’s radical pan-Islamist project to establish a *commonality of view* among Muslims that they must unite against the threat of western “culture attack” and heresy practice by Muslims outside the Wahhabism line. They believed that other religions, other branches of Islam, secularism, socialism, communism, liberalism, nationalism, capitalism and other “isms” as the part

of present *non Islamic world structure*. From Gramscian perspective, Saudi-Wahhabist long term “counter hegemonic” goal of dissemination Wahabbist’s version of “Islamic common sense” as a passive revolution tool to overthrow hegemonic “non Islamic common sense”.

### **Indonesian Teaching Of Islam**

**Indonesian Muslim.** Geographically, Indonesia is the farthest Muslim country away from the Middle East, thus delayed process of Islamization in the country. The spread of Islam into Indonesia was gradual and peaceful, more assimilative than revolutionary, on the heels not of conquest but of trade. Islam had spread to nearly all of Indonesia's coastal societies by the time the Dutch’s United East India Company established control of the spice trade in the 17th century.<sup>48</sup> There is evidence that the spread of Islam began at the end of the 13th century, even though Muslim traders had already entering Indonesia as early as the 8th century. As a matter of fact, traders and the royalty of major kingdoms were the first to adopt the new religion.<sup>49</sup> Indonesian Muslims, appears to be less Arabized in comparison with Muslims in other parts of the Islamic world, in the course of which older religious beliefs and norms have been slowly changed without necessarily disappearing.<sup>50</sup> However, the presence of Islam in Indonesia has transformed a great deal of its traditional cultural constructs.<sup>51</sup> Islam was so successful coming throughout most of Indonesia because it was able to accommodate the existing centuries-old traditions, culture and religions, partly indigenous, partly Hindu-Buddhist, and in the process, lost much of its doctrinal strength.<sup>52</sup> After its independence, the Unitary Republic of Indonesia emerged not exactly as a secular state, but not as a religiously based state either. The national philosophy, Pancasila (five principles) acknowledged belief in one God, but did not discriminate among the recognized religions - Islam, Catholic, Protestant, Hinduism, and Confucianism. Our founding fathers, which were predominantly Muslim, although they were aware that Muslims are the majority population,

had wisely chose this form , because they want Indonesia to become a big house that protects all groups, despite their races, tribes, beliefs and religions.<sup>53</sup>

There are two most influential groups of Islamic movement in modern Indonesia. First “*The Islamic Modernist*” group represented by the Muhammadiyah and the Persatuan Islam (Persis) movements in 1912 and 1923, their goal to purify Indonesian Islam from “corrupting local influences and practices”, following the modernist *salafism* to reformulate Islamic doctrines through direct reference to the Qur’an and the Hadith in the light of modern thought, without too much dependence to the interpretations of the Ulama (Medieval).<sup>54</sup> As reaction to the establishment of the Muhammadiyah, “*the Islamic Traditionalist*” groups represented by the Nahdlatul Ulama" (NU) and the Persatuan Tarbiyah Islamiyah (Perti) in 1926, both preferred to follow the interpretations of the (medieval) Ulamas in religious affairs, who act as both religious leaders and teachers at Islamic boarding schools (pesantren).<sup>55</sup> As a matter of fact, both the reformists and the traditionalists are strongly attached to the classical paradigm of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa’l-Jama’ah Theology (Follower of the Qur’an and the Hadith).<sup>56</sup> However , Allan A. Samson described traditionalist and modernist as politically accommodationist or reformist in nature, and he added a further type of Islamic movement in Indonesia, which he named “radical fundamentalist” which was attributed to the Darul Islam movement of the 1950s, which launched a rebellion against the new Indonesian state, aiming to establish an Islamic State of Indonesia. Samson noted that the continuation of this fundamentalist groups from the past bears a correlation to Islamic radical groups of the present which has contributed to violent actions of terrorism.<sup>57</sup>

**Islamic Education.** Two decades after independence in 1945, Islamic education atmosphere in Indonesia still lacked of “critical thinking tradition” of modern academic culture. Up until then, IAIN’s (Public Institute of Islamic Religion) academic staff had been he...

oriented toward the University of Al-Azhar in Cairo and had maintained an exclusive attachment to the Shafi'ite school of law. The Al-Azhar's academic culture at that time did not allow IAIN to exercise a democratizing or civilsocietal influence, promoted civic freedoms and any deviations from neo-traditionalist dogma.<sup>58</sup> The first real progress of Islamic modernization thought took place when several western graduated scholars had involved in graduate level Islamic education. One of them, Harun Nasution, a doctoral graduate of McGill University (1962-1968) established the foundations of the modern academic culture in the IAIN Jakarta in 1969. Nasution himself brought a broader approach to academic cultural life and provide the means for students to speak out and even to inquire critically into established Islamic doctrines.<sup>59</sup> On the other hand, Nurcholish Madjid, who received his doctorate in Islamic Studies from the University of Chicago voiced similar concerns over the issues faced by the Muslim community in Indonesia. Like their modernist predecessors, Madjid and his group are also interested in revitalizing ij'tihad (personal interpretation) by introducing the ideals of modernity, but they insist that these must be based on the principal Islamic traditions.<sup>60</sup>

Another scholar, Muhammad Imaduddin Abdulrahim, presented more fundamentalist view of Islam without abandoning his critical modern perspective. He his master degree (1963-1965) and PhD degree (1980-1986) in electrical engineering at Iowa State University. During his time in America, he discussed Islamic issues with other Muslim intellectuals and they shared same idea that it is not enough to just be righteous in religious rituals (prayer, alms, fasting, pilgrimage) but also should have deep religious and general knowledge that can grasp the message of the Al Qur'an and the Hadith (Tradition of the Prophet) to find out the answer of Muslim's real life issues. Further on, Imaduddin engineered the Preacher Training Programs at prestigious Bandung 15 Institute of Technology which attracted students from various universities to join *da'wa* (Islamic

Mission) in which they were learned some basic teachings of Islam, the source of Islamic rules, Islamic rituals and Islamic history. Lots of students was attracted, and then as “newborn young Muslims” they held Islamic training activities in their own universities and mosques. Not surprisingly, two or three years later Islamic activities mushroomed on campuses and mosques throughout Indonesia.<sup>61</sup>

**Wahabbism in Indonesia.** The Wahabbism encroached to Indonesia massively following the Iranian Revolution in 1979 which was profound in all corners of the Muslim world despite the Shiite dominance of Iran. The fate of Saudi throne was threatened by the successful Iranian Islamic revolution, led to a vigorous response from Saudi Arabia to counter the influence of Iranian revolution. and with billions of petrodollar, Saudi Arabia started proliferation of its puritanical wahabbism ideology through several NGOs and organizations, such as the Muslim World League, World Association of Muslim Youth, and charities, such as Al Haramain.<sup>62</sup> As what have already written in the previous paragraph, from Gramscian perspective, Saudi Arabia conducted da’wa campaign as “passive revolution” around the Islamic world, including Indonesia by spreading “*constructed narratives*” of wahabbist ideology as “*standard Islamic norms*” in the field of *education, language, religion and the media* through the institutions of Islamic civil society. It was brought a growing number of young Indonesian muslims to study abroad with scholarships and educational exchanges at Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Yemen.<sup>63</sup>

Many scholars agrees that Indonesia’s domestic political situation at that time coincidentally facilitating this da’wa campaign. As a matter of fact, President Suharto’s regime banned all political activities by student groups after big student demonstrations against Suharto’s third term election victory in 1978, and soon after that, several muslim student groups turned into the da’wa movement in the campuses and mosques.<sup>64</sup> There was also a rapid proliferation of

da'wa organizations on campuses that were dominated by young Muslims who had returned from study in the Middle East with scholarship from Saudi government. However, their da'wa strategy did not affiliate directly with radical approach of wahabbism, but with a softer approach model, a *“Pan-Islamic charity work, combined with religious, and political activism”*, the *Ikhwanul Muslimin (Muslim Brotherhood)*, established by Hasan Al-Banna in Egypt and also influenced by the *Jamiat-e-Islami*, founded by Abul A'la Maududi in Pakistan.<sup>65</sup> This strategy based on, first, the fact that at that time Indonesia, like Islamic countries of Iraq, Egypt and Syria, was governed by secular dictatorships, and second, most of Indonesian Muslims still did not comfortable yet with wahabbism ideas. However, after Suharto regime fallen during “Reformation” uprising in 1998, this network of campus Islamic study groups reemerged as “Partai Keadilan (Justice Party)”, which of course modeled itself on the network of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood. The party, likewise, would not accept government funding, although it has taken money from its members and foreign sources, including Egypt, and not surprisingly from Saudi Arabia.<sup>66</sup>

As a matter of fact, besides the growing resurgence of Islam in Indonesia, based on the Islamist parties performance in the legislative elections, very few Indonesian Muslims are attracted to Islamism, much less to radicalism.<sup>67</sup> In actuality, compared to the nationalist-secular parties performance, the Islamist parties; PKB, PAN, PKS, PPP, PBB, and PBR, won only 20.5 percent of the vote in the 2004 legislative elections. This is roughly the same as the former Islamic Party Masyumi did in 1955.<sup>68</sup> Indonesian Muslim voters prefer a party in accordance with the suitability of his political views, not based on religious views especially by the spirit of fundamentalist Wahabbism that is clearly incompatible with the basic culture and ideology of Indonesian un 17 state.

### **Protecting Indonesian Muslim Common Sense.**

**Strengthen Islamic Civil Society.** It is clear that the resurgence of the Islamic movement in Indonesia is strongly influenced by the teaching of Wahabbism sponsored by the Saudi government, but on the other hand, the spirit of radicalism in the doctrine does not change common sense of majority Indonesian Muslims, neither became followers of Wahhabism with its jihadist and takfirist attitude, nor put the sharia law beyond compliance with the national laws, the unitary state of Indonesia, and the Pancasila as state philosophy. There are several defensive measures by Indonesian government and societies to protect “Indonesian Muslim common sense” against wahabism’s “passive revolution”, it was achieved through strengthen of civil society institutions in the field of *education, language, religion and the media*.

**Strengthen Education.** In the field of *education*, government issued the decision regulating universal instruction in religion through the collaboration of both *the Department of National Education* and *the Department of Religious Affairs*. It is stated that religious education is a core subject for all students from primary school to university to ensure that students in public schools and universities (public or private) receive religious education from teachers of their own religion. Recently, through rejection from non-Muslim schools, this regulation has been validated as the National Education System Law on June 11, 2003 and brought about change in religious trends, so that many students have been able to learn and practise their religion within schools and universities.<sup>69</sup> By this regulation, government and society can assure that not only students could practice their religion without discrimination, but also make sure that only peaceful messages of religion get into the minds of children that future generations would learn and adopt Indonesia’s tolerant values, morals, and world views as their “common sense”. 18

Both Islamic public and private schools (primary to high school) are generally pluralist and do not reside in an indoctrinatory tradition and embrace non-religious subjects and their student

activities promote rationality and autonomy. Not only learn Islamic subjects, but also learn general knowledge such as the English, mathematics, sciences, history and geography of countries outside Indonesia, as well as the computer skill, language and culture of English-speaking countries to keep them abreast of modern knowledge and skills for success in a globalized and digital world. Most of the Islamic school students also got outdoor activities such as sports, farming, hiking, marching band and scouting.<sup>70</sup>

At the graduate level, Public Islamic University (UIN) fosters strong rationality and strong autonomy through its curriculum, methodology in the study of Islam, and learning environment. The curriculum for Islamic subjects at UIN encourages its students to engage in critical thinking by considering and comparing a variety school of thought and traditions, both within and outside the Islam faith. The methodology let students' horizon covers a wide canvass of Islamic beyond the confines of the Shafi'i law and not limited to one Islamic school of thought but to study other legal schools of thought such as the Hanafi, Hanbali, Maliki, and Ja'fari law.<sup>71</sup>

Then, their learning environment let student not only learn about Sunnite literature grounded in the Ash'ari theology but also non-mainstream Islamic literature such as the theological school of Maturidis, Sufi'sm, Shi'a, and Mu'tazila schools of thought. Students have to learn about Muslim scholars known for their progressive views such as Fazlur Rahman, Muhammed Arkoun, Muhammed al-Jabiri, Hassan Hanafi, and even Western Orientalists such as Ignaz Goldziher.<sup>72</sup> The focus of the study transcends identifying the differences or critiquing other schools of thought. The educational objective is for the students to be more open, tolerant, and pluralist by appreciating different religious interpretations and new thoughts on religion.<sup>73</sup>

**Strengthen Language.** In the field of *language*, Indonesian best defensive against foreign culture is Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian language), which is practice widely not only in the schools and homes, but also in many outlets of society. Kevin W. Fogg described that Indonesian Muslims clearly had no need to use of Arabic language to replace Bahasa Indonesia because several reasons, there are ; Bahasa Indonesia is an active national language, its purpose is to unite Indonesian; Arab culture is foreign, eventhough many of Indonesians adopt Islam, they are not interested in rejecting their own culture; Indonesia has many local languages already; and the last reason, Indonesia is not an Islamic country and from the early days there is no focus in enforcing "Islamic" language for the whole nation, some Arab word once only used in religious activity, then in daily conversation it was used even by non muslim, thus, they become part of Bahasa Indonesia.<sup>74</sup> Indonesian Muslims like others speak bahasa Indonesia almost in every aspect of activities, with English widely taught at school as a second language and Arabic is used mostly during praying time only. Dr. Nikolaos van Dam explained that the reason why very few Indonesians could communicate in Arabic, because knowledge of Arabic among Indonesians is almost exclusively derived from studying the Qur'an or Islamic subjects in general. However, committing the Qur'an to memory does not necessarily imply a real understanding of the text or an ability to converse in Arabic about mundane issues.<sup>75</sup> For most Indonesian Muslim, Arabic still a foreign language of the Middle Eastern and have no useful purpose for daily communication except for praying.

**Strengthen Religion.** In the field of *religion*; Gramscian looked at religion as a powerful force in civil society to influence the hearts and minds of people. The establishment of the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, was part of the role of the government to promote and control of religion practices and relations, especially Islam as the largest religion.<sup>76</sup> Beside

controlling religion practices, the vital role of the Ministry of Religious Affairs is in providing and supervising religious courses instruction and textbooks. However, teachers are expected to impose their own understanding of religious matters, rather they should maintain a balance and discuss fairly the various understandings of Islam. They have the right to teach Islam in a way that is suited to their students's level, and the teaching of religion in the universities level like UIN are more open than at lower level school, and might well accommodate both traditionalist and modernist views of Islam, but of course not the radicalist one.<sup>77</sup> The students are also introduced to ideas and thoughts from other Islamic traditions and non-Islamic sources and systems. Campus welcomes intellectual, social, and cultural interactions with ideas from modern western philosophers such as Kant, Husserl, Heidegger, and Gadamer in order to broaden the intellectual vistas of its students. Islamic students are also introduced to concepts of Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism and are free to debate on the essential validity of these religions.<sup>78</sup> The principle of tolerance to non-Muslims is taught based on the Qur'an verses of "Lakum dinukum waliya din" (your belief is yours and so my belief is mine) and the exemplary behavior of the Prophet Muhammad.<sup>79</sup> Friday sermon speeches at Indonesian mosques usually issued by a formal religious organization or branch of ministry of religious affairs so that it can be controlled not to teach and spread radicalism to the public. Police and local governments will reprimand and forbid if there is a sermon teaching radicalism that violates the religious peace.<sup>80</sup> The government also found that the ministry was a significant tool of intervention in the daily affairs of Indonesian Muslims so its could be kept in line with the government's policies.<sup>81</sup>

**Strengthen The Media.** In the field of *the media*, as a historical fact, after the "Reformation" uprising, Indonesian press have the liberty required in a democratic society since the government and the Indonesian House of Representatives passed the Freedom of Press Law in

1999, ushering in an unprecedented period of press freedom in Indonesia.<sup>82</sup> However the terrorist groups got a chance to take advantage of this freedom. Michael Davis notes that the objective of the terrorist group Laskar Jihad tactics to targeting civilians is to increase tensions and religious polarization between the Muslim and Christian communities throughout Indonesia using mass media coverage.<sup>83</sup> Clearly, the media industry gave terrorists the almost perfect tool to spread its propaganda, benefiting from a bigger audience, and spreads the terror almost instantaneously, because the main victims of the attacks are the people who watch the attacks, not its direct victims. Media industry have the power to influence and bringing together all actors in the counter terrorism effort, which are governments, firms, and individuals, either by influence public opinion, alter corporate strategies, and even press on government policies.<sup>84</sup> Present day, Indonesian media are already quite mature, independent and do not recognize the censor. In many respects the media, the public and the government already know each other's position. In the principle Indonesian media can freely discuss or debate about related Islamism issues openly, even public debate through the media of television, radio and new media such as the Internet has become a commonplace.<sup>85</sup>

**Public Sphere as Deradicalizing Tool.** However, as part of counter-terrorism campaign, The Indonesian Communications and Information Ministry has blocked several radical websites expressed support for the Islamic State movement and other jihadist groups in an attempt to prevent the dissemination of radical ideas that could contribute to terrorism.<sup>86</sup> Sidney Jones noted that Indonesia's freedom of press creates "a public sphere" or space within which all communities including radicals individual or groups can advocate for Islamic law and an Islamic state without feeling the need to resort to violent action in pursuit of those goals. Jones also noted that certain groups have taken advantage of that space, but "it does keep the numbers of violent extremists" to

a “manageable” level.<sup>87</sup> This is aligned with Jurgen Habermas explanation of “the public sphere” as an area in social life where individuals and groups associate can come together to freely discuss matters of mutual interest and identify societal problems, and, where possible, to reach a common judgment and influence political action through that discussion.<sup>88</sup> Indonesian public sphere facilitated by the media triggered a backlash toward the ISIS’s brutality and decision to proclaim a caliphate from the Indonesian Muslim community, not only mainstream Muslim organizations, but also most of the hardline Muslim community have distanced themselves from ISIS. ISIS actions have drawn criticism from jihadist media outlets and radical clerics in the country, which have declared ISIS a “deviant” movement. Jones noted that the radicalization program by the Muslim majority rather than government programs that are keeping the number of ISIS supporters down.<sup>89</sup>

### **Conclusion.**

The ideological power behind attractiveness of ISIS and other radical group’s global propaganda campaign toward young generation of Muslim is based on Wahabbism ideology with the spirit of Pan Islamic Nationalism. By looking at the Gramscian theory of hegemony we can describe that their counterhegemonic movement have supported by Wahhabist campaign of spreading “common sense” among the Muslim which already accepted its as “standard Islamic norms”. The jihadist strategy is using “war of position” through persuasion or propaganda, to increase the number of people who share its view on the hegemonic order then radicalized unaware young Muslims to join the jihadist movement or uprising against the government . However in the “war of movement”, they have grown instruments of power large enough to overthrow, violently or democratically, the current hegemons in Middle East and establish themselves as a new historic bloc, which was already started as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria.

The lesson learned that we can get from the experience of Indonesia efforts to face Wahhabis campaign in the guise of a pan-Islamic nationalism. Supported by substantial funds and effort from the middle east donors, and maximizing the use of mosques, religious institutions, books, seminars, schools and the media of Islam, either conventional or new media-based internet, makes the thought of radical Wahabbism dominated the more pluralist thoughts of Islam and slow but sure its become the new "standard of Islam". From the Gramscian perspective, we can see how experts , scholars and Wahhabist Islamic organizations trying hard to carry out the passive revolution by changing the teachings of Islam in Indonesia. The Wahabbism project unsuccessful to change the general Indonesian Muslims common sense because efforts and influences from some western educated Indonesian Muslim scholars to strengthen government and society awareness to protect Indonesian Islam "common sense" However Indonesian government and societies held several defensive measures through strengthen of civil society institutions in the field of education, language, religion and the media to protect "Muslim common sense". The Indonesian Muslim intellectuals were increasingly concerned with the question of the proper role of Islam in national development and how Islamic values should be reconciled with a western brand of nationalism.

We can apply this strategy in other countries that have difficulty neutralizing the younger generation thought from poisonic radicalism. Exchange opinions regarding Islam on television, radio or writings still hardly give place to the opinion of the radicals because the general public have already got awareness of the wahabbist "hidden agenda". Masimizing the media as tool to create *public sphere* worked well, based on the fact that after two decades slammed by wahabbism propaganda most of Indonesian Muslims still considers radicalism is not the personality of the Indonesian nation and that jihad preferably to improve and helping people in distress and not at

the stage of doing battle, unless if we came under attack from the outside. To conclude, Indonesia moderate Islam should win the “War of Position” against the jihadist. Jihad for most Indonesian Muslims is to defending our way of life and our homeland, and not to supporting an wahhabist counter-hegemonic campaign to build an utopian Islamic State. As the third largest democratic country and also the largest Muslim country in the world, the prosperous and peaceloving Indonesia is a proof that democracy is compatible with Islamic values.



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